

Pre-Application Programme Document V2
Expansion of Heathrow Airport (Third Runway)
October 2025

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This updated Pre-Application Programme Document (v2) supports the proposed application for development consent by Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) (“the Applicant”) for the Expansion of Heathrow Airport (Third Runway) Project (the “Project”) at Heathrow Airport. It updates an earlier version submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (“PINS”) on 31 March 2025.
- 1.2 The Project has been registered with the Planning Inspectorate and given case reference TR020003¹. This Programme Document is produced to assist PINS to resume the pre-application process for the Project.
- 1.3 The Project involves the construction of a new runway and terminal infrastructure that will increase the capability of Heathrow Airport to provide air passenger transport services by more than 10 million passengers per annum (mppa). The Project therefore includes airport-related development that is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under sections 14(1)(i) and 23 of the Planning Act 2008 (“PA 2008”). The Project also encompasses highway-related development, including proposals to divert the M25 motorway, which is classified as an NSIP under sections 14(1)(h) and 22 of the PA 2008.
- 1.4 Support for the principle of the Project is contained in the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS), designated on 26 June 2018. The ANPS confirms that there is a national need for additional hub airport capacity in the South East of England and that the Heathrow North West Runway Scheme is the most effective and appropriate way of meeting the needs case. The policies in the ANPS have effect in relation to the Heathrow North West Runway scheme, having a runway length of at least 3,500m and enabling at least 260,000 air transport movements per annum². It also has effect in relation to terminal infrastructure associated with the Heathrow North West Runway scheme and the reconfiguration of terminal facilities in the area between the two existing runways at Heathrow Airport. Since the publication of the ANPS the Project has been renamed the Expansion of Heathrow Airport (Third Runway) Project and this is the project name used throughout this document.
- 1.5 On 22 October 2025, the Secretary of State for Transport launched a review of the ANPS and indicated that “if amendments are needed to the ANPS as a result of the review, we expect to consult on an amended policy statement by next summer”³.
- 1.6 A revised National Networks NPS (NNNPS), the relevant national policy statement for highways infrastructure, was designated on 24 May 2024⁴. The NNNPS is relevant to some highway components of the Project.

¹ PINS NSIP project page

² ANPS paragraphs 1.15 and 4.3

³ Realising the benefits of expansion at Heathrow Airport

⁴ NNNPS

- 1.7 The Government has recently confirmed its support for the expansion of Heathrow airport. In January 2025, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced support for the expansion of Heathrow Airport with the addition of a third runway:

*"I have always been clear that a third runway at Heathrow would unlock further growth, boost investment, increase exports, and make the UK more open and more connected as part of our Plan for Change. And now the case is stronger than ever because our reforms to the economy - like speeding up our planning system, and our strengthened plans to modernise UK airspace - mean the delivery of this project is set up for success. So I can confirm today that this Government supports a third runway at Heathrow and is inviting proposals to be brought forward by the summer."*⁵

- 1.8 In response to a letter from the Secretary of State for Transport dated 30 June 2025, which invited proposals for a third runway to be brought forward by 'this summer'⁶ the Applicant submitted its proposals for Expanding Heathrow on 31 July 2025 ("the Proposals Submission")⁷. As the letter from the Secretary of State explains, that invitation for proposals does not form part of the development consent order (DCO) process, which is underpinned by the PA 2008 referred to above. The letter indicated that "applications for planning consent (are expected to) come forward in time to enable decisions to be made this Parliament". The Secretary of State's 22 October 2025 statement reiterated the Government's commitment "to making a decision on a third runway at Heathrow within this Parliament". This Pre-Application Programme Document relates to the DCO process and is separate from the summer Proposals Submission.

The Pre-Application Programme Document

- 1.9 This Pre-Application Programme Document sets out the proposed approach and programme for the pre-application engagement with PINS. It sets out planned events / milestones and related timescales to aid and inform activities and resource-planning in connection with the Project. It is based on the Applicant moving to the enhanced pre-application service on 1 October 2025.
- 1.10 Where appropriate, we have indicated a wide meeting window that will help the Inspectorate manage its resources most effectively, including assigning a pre-application Examining Inspector. This can be narrowed/date agreed subsequently with the case team. The Document enables those engaged in the pre-application process, especially statutory consultees and local authorities, to understand the relevant timescales and ensure their contribution is programmed into the pre-application stage at the most effective point.
- 1.11 The Programme Document has been prepared having regard to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects'⁸, as well as relevant advice issued by

⁵ Chancellor's Announcement of support for Heathrow Expansion

⁶ Letter to potential promoters of Heathrow expansion

⁷ HAL Our Proposal for Expanding Heathrow

⁸ Guidance on the pre-application stage for NSIPs

PINS in the 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus'⁹, as amended on 22 October 2025.

- 1.12 This Pre-Application Programme Document has been prepared having regard to the current DCO framework (e.g. legislation, guidance, policy and legal principles) as at the date of the latest version of the document. The Pre-Application Programme Document will be updated by the Applicant as necessary up until the submission of the application for development consent.
- 1.13 In particular, the Applicant is monitoring the progress of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill ("PIB") through Parliament¹⁰. The PIB is likely to have significant implications for the Project. As an example, the Bill proposes removing the requirements for statutory pre-application consultation and the government is proposing to replace those requirements with guidance on non-statutory pre-application consultation and engagement. It will be necessary to take changes into account that are brought about by the PIB and related guidance in formulating the approach to further consultation and engagement on the project. This Pre-Application Programme Document will be reviewed and updated once the Planning and Infrastructure Bill becomes law, which is expected to be by the end of 2025.
- 1.14 This Pre-Application Programme Document is published on the Applicant's project website.

⁹ Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus - GOV.UK

¹⁰ MHCLG Consultation on streamlining infrastructure planning

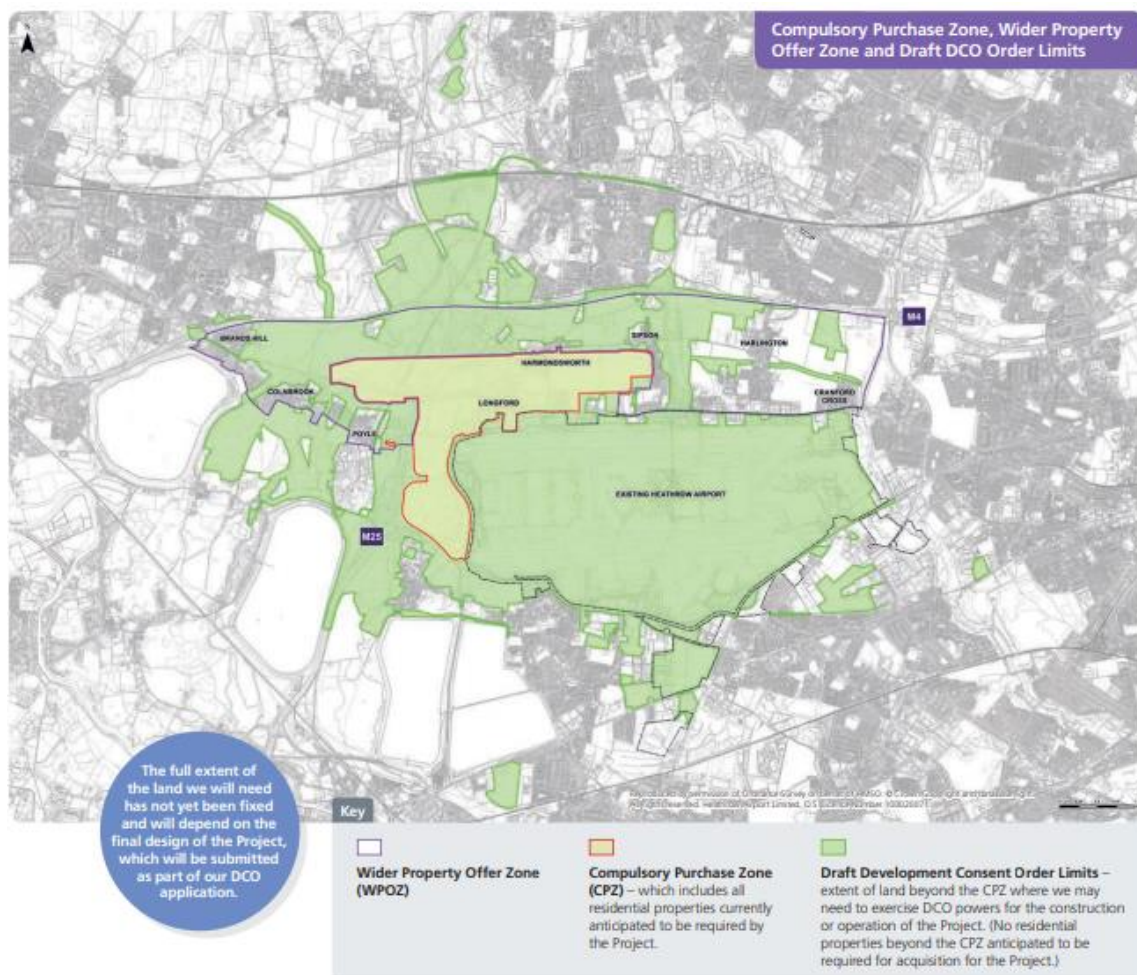
2 Project Description

2.1 The description of the Project remains as it was in 2020:

“Expansion of Heathrow Airport to enable at least 740,000 air traffic movements per annum and including a new runway to the north-west of the existing airport; supporting airfield, terminal and transport infrastructure; works to the M25, local roads and rivers; temporary construction works, mitigation works and other associated development.”

2.2 The Project draft DCO Order Limits was shown in the statutory consultation carried out by the Applicant from June to September 2019. Figure 1 below is taken from the consultation document¹¹, which shows the draft DCO order limits (as well as the compulsory purchase zone and wider property offer zone) as understood at that time.

Figure 1: Draft DCO Order Limits (June 2019)



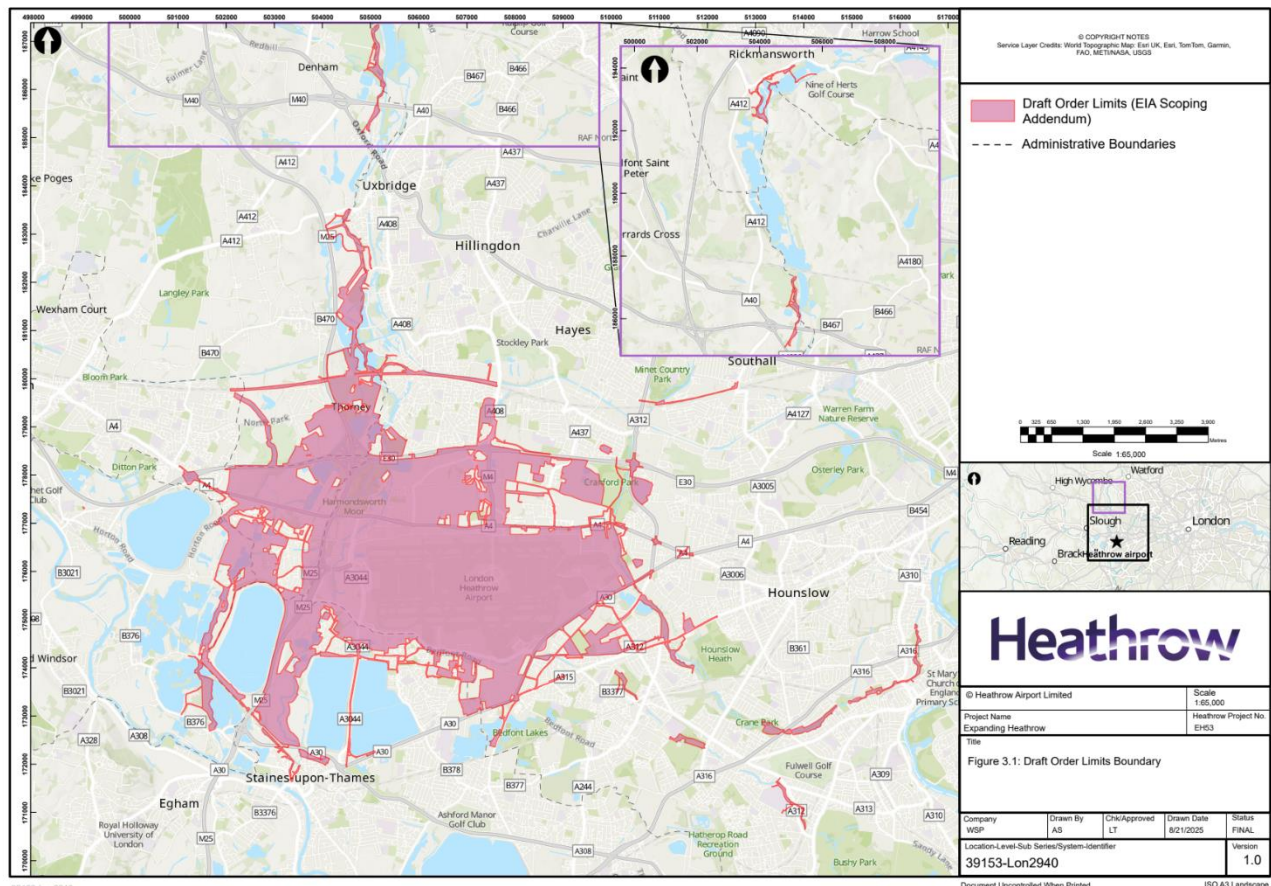
2.3 An updated version of the Project draft DCO Order Limits was submitted to PINS on the 1 September 2025 as part of the Applicant's EIA Scoping Report Addendum ("the EIA Scoping

¹¹ Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation Document June 2019

Report Addendum”). Figure 2 shown below is Figure 3.1 in the EIA Scoping Report Addendum (noting that this refers now to the ‘draft Order Limits’)¹². The differences between Figure 1 above and Figure 2 below are explained in chapter 3 of the EIA Scoping Report Addendum.

- 2.4 As with all aspects of the Project, the draft Order Limits may be subject to refinement as the Applicant continues to develop its DCO application, responds to engagement and proceeds through the pre-application stage to submission.

Figure 2: Draft Order Limits (September 2025)



- 2.5 The Project comprises the following main components:

- **A third runway** of 3,500 metres, approximately 1km to the north west of the existing northern runway
- **Related runway infrastructure**, including additional taxiways
- **New terminal and satellite infrastructure**
- **An expanded Terminal 5 campus**

¹² EIA Scoping Report Figures (September 2025)

- **A realigned M25 Motorway and associated junction improvements, and changes to the road network**
- **Improvements to active travel and public transport infrastructure, as well as parking infrastructure**
- **Enhancement of airport supporting development**, which includes operational and commercial facilities within and around the airport
- **Diversions to rivers**, including creating opportunities for significant enhancements to the local water environment
- **Safeguarding of land for displaced land uses and community facilities**
- **Construction phase works**

2.6 The Project also includes a range of proposals regarding changes to the operations of the airport, environmental mitigation / enhancement measures and the management of effects on local communities.

2.7 Heathrow has historically safeguarded land to support the development of rail infrastructure, including proposals for a Western Rail Link and/or a Southern Rail Link to Heathrow. These proposals would further enhance the rail network to the airport and serve the areas to the west and south of Heathrow. Any rail scheme is likely to constitute an NSIP in its own right and be consented by way of a DCO. The Applicant is reviewing how additional rail links to Heathrow may best be delivered.

3 Pre-Application Timetable

- 3.1 Consistent with Ministerial announcements, the Applicant has resumed the DCO pre-application process with a view to its application being determined in this Parliament.
- 3.2 The Applicant is building on the extensive work already undertaken to define, assess and consult upon the Project. It is reviewing what is proposed for the Project, in light of changes in circumstances, including legislative, policy and guidance updates, in addition to the feedback already received in response to pre-application consultation and stakeholder engagement.
- 3.3 The principal milestones and key dates during the pre-application stage are provided in Table 1 below. These milestones and dates are subject to periodic review.
- 3.4 The Applicant's view is that the Project and scope of supporting information will need to be refreshed and refined to take into account the pause since 2020. The Applicant is in the process of resuming engagement with statutory consultees, stakeholders and the community. A further round of consultation will be undertaken to ensure that the DCO application to be submitted is informed and shaped by up-to-date data and feedback.
- 3.5 As alluded to above, the Applicant submitted an EIA Scoping Report Addendum to PINS on 1 September 2025. The EIA Scoping Report Addendum is intended to supplement and be read alongside the Applicant's EIA Scoping Report (submitted on 21 May 2018) (**the 2018 Scoping Report**)¹³ and the Scoping Opinion (adopted by the Secretary of State on 29 June 2018) (**the 2018 Scoping Opinion**)¹⁴. The Secretary of State issued a Scoping Opinion on 10 October 2025 which should be read in conjunction with the 2018 Scoping Report and the 2018 Scoping Opinion.
- 3.6 A number of legislative and policy changes are anticipated to take place during the pre-application stage of the Applicant's DCO application, including Royal Assent of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, and associated secondary legislation and guidance, the Airports NPS being reviewed, and airspace change consultation(s). Each is likely to have implications for the pre-application stage of the DCO to varying degrees. Some of the dates in the table below are based on assumptions around the timing of these developments and activities. Therefore, the events / milestones outlined below, including the content of the meetings, and scheduled timings may need to be altered and updated to reflect changes to the legislative and policy framework as well as Project developments. The Applicant will liaise with the Inspectorate on this matter as and when necessary, to assist PINS with its resource planning.

¹³ EIA Scoping Report Volume 1 Main Report (May 2018)

¹⁴ The Planning Inspectorate Scoping Opinion (June 2018)

Table 1: Key pre-application events and milestones (all dates in the future are indicative)

Event / Milestone	Date
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	2016 / 2017
Airport Expansion Consultation One and Airspace Principles Consultation (non-statutory)	January to March 2018
Airport Expansion EIA Scoping Report	May 2018
2018 Scoping Opinion	29 June 2018
Airspace and Future Operations Consultation (non-statutory)	January to March 2019
Section 46 notification	17 June 2019
Airport Expansion Consultation (statutory)	June to September 2019
Issue Programme Document to PINS	March 2025
PINS Inception Meeting	April 2025
PINS Project Update Meeting	June 2025
HAL Consents Team host PINS Environmental Team for Project briefing and site visit around the operational boundary and draft Order Limits	August 2025
EIA Scoping Report Addendum submitted to PINS	1 September 2025
Scoping Opinion issued by PINS	10 October 2025
Enhanced Pre-Application Service with PINS commences	October 2025
Issue Programme Document V2 to PINS	October 2025
1) Meeting to discuss the Scoping Opinion issued by PINS (10 October 2025) and HAL Environment Team queries for developing PEIR or successor.	Mid – December 2025/January 2026
2) HAL Consents Team host PINS Pre-application Team and Inspector/s for Project briefing and site visit around the operational boundary and draft Order Limits.	Mid – December 2025/January 2026
3) Meeting to discuss approach to consultation and scope of consultation material.	W/C 16 February 2026
4) Surface Access Proposals	February 2026
5) Tripartite Meeting with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) – process of airspace change	Q4 2025 – Feb 2026
6) Meeting to discuss any queries arising from Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) and design and production of any report.	W/C 30 March 2026
7) Meeting to discuss Land and Property workstream	May 2026
8) Discussion on implications of Project, if any, of draft policy change (assumes a draft ANPS is issued for consultation in June)	July 2026
9) Meeting to run-through full consultation materials (launch September 2026)	August 2026
Project Consultation	September – October 2026
Further PINS meetings to be determined	October 2026 onwards
PINS Draft DCO Application Documents Review	End 2026 / early 2027

DCO Application Submission	Q4 2027
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4 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

- 4.1 The Applicant undertook extensive scheme development, consultation, and engagement work over a period of many years in the lead up to 2020.

Consultation

- 4.2 The consultations undertaken on the Project to date are:
- Airport Expansion Consultation One and Airspace Principles Consultation (January to March 2018) (non-statutory)
 - Airspace and Future Operations Consultation (January to March 2019) (non-statutory)
 - Airport Expansion Consultation (June to September 2019) (statutory)
- 4.3 These consultations presented consultees with options for scheme development and detailed information on the Project. Feedback was received and fully considered and taken into account, as appropriate. For the purposes of the PA 2008, the June to September 2019 Airport Expansion Consultation was the formal statutory consultation on the Project. An overview of this consultation will be published in Q1 2026.
- 4.4 The Applicant intends to undertake a further round of consultation between September and October 2026, prior to submitting its DCO application. This will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 2 of Part 5 of the PA 2008 as may be amended by the PIB, having regard to all relevant guidance and advice.
- 4.5 For the purposes of consultation with local communities, the Applicant prepared and published a SoCC earlier in the process in accordance with section 47 of the PA 2008. The Applicant intends to engage with local authorities and other stakeholders on its proposed approach to further consultation, including in light of changes that may be introduced by the PIB when enacted.
- 4.6 The Applicant will prepare and submit a report as part of the DCO application, which will explain how consultation feedback was taken into account and informed the development of the Project.

Engagement

- 4.7 The Applicant undertook extensive engagement with a wide range of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders, including through community engagement forums, over the course of the Project's development in the lead up to 2020. This included significant engagement with stakeholders on the scoping and preparation of the EIA, as well as in relation to the design and development of proposals of relevance to local residents and businesses.
- 4.8 The Applicant has recommenced its engagement with relevant statutory and non-statutory organisations to further develop its proposals for the Project. It is in the process of discussing

and putting in place Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) with relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).

5 Main Issues for Resolution

- 5.1 Table 2 below provides the Applicant's current view regarding the potential main issues for resolution during the pre-application period and the activities that will be undertaken to address these.

Table 2: Applicant's view of main issues for resolution

Issue	Response
Assumptions and forecasts	The Applicant is currently reviewing and validating its proposals for the Project, this supported the proposals submitted to Government on the 31 July 2025. <i>This work includes confirming scheme assumptions and forecasts that underpin the Project.</i>
Design development and option selection	The Applicant will undertake a review of the Project's design to ensure the proposals take account of changes in circumstances since the programme was paused, as well as feedback from consultation and stakeholders. This includes the masterplan design but also other elements of the scheme including, for example, the mitigation package, jobs and skills requirements, and the proposals for the community fund.
Scheme impact and mitigation	The Applicant's preliminary view is that some minor aspects of the Project and scope of supporting information will need to be refreshed and refined to take into account changes in circumstances since the pause in 2020. An Addendum Scoping Opinion was received on 10 October 2025 and together with the 29 June 2018 EIA scoping opinion for the Project which was adopted by PINS on behalf of the Secretary of State on 29 June 2018 this sets out the scope of the EIA to accompany the DCO. The Applicant will undertake a refreshed assessment on surface access proposals, including exploring coach, bus, rail connectivity and active travel infrastructure. The Applicant will assess the surface access strategy with regard to the transport mode share targets and staff car trips set out in the current Airport National Policy Statement (ANPS), acknowledging a review of the ANPS was announced in October 2025.
Land and property acquisition	The Applicant will review any changes to the baseline position and re-engage with landowners and occupiers.
Construction impacts	The Applicant will review and validate the proposed construction approach, taking into account any changes in circumstances and delivery requirements for the Project.

6 Main Risks to the Pre-Application Stage

- 6.1 The Applicant operates a process to identify and monitor risks to the programme in line with best practice for major infrastructure projects. The Applicant recognises the risks associated with updating the Project proposals, which have been developed over a long period, including a period of hiatus.
- 6.2 The Applicant has identified the need to update the Project assumptions to reflect any legislative, policy or other baseline changes. In particular, the Applicant recognises the potential for changes as a result of the enactment of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill 2025 and potential change as a result of the review of the ANPS. We will respond to any implications for the project resulting from changes in legislation and/or policy as they arise.
- 6.3 As the Project has an extended period of time to undertake pre-application activity, the Applicant recognises that risks will be identified as the Project progresses through the pre-application stage. This includes the risk of changes to the programme and submission that could arise as a result of matters identified during the pre-application stage.
- 6.4 The Applicant will continue to track any risks to the achievement of the pre-application stage and manage them by keeping the programme under review.